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Our economic future relies on what we do now to nurture the STEM talent that will be necessary to meet the demands of an increasingly technological and knowledge-based economy.

I want to thank Ranking Member LUCAS for joining me in introducing this bill, and I urge the rest of my colleagues to please join us. I include my full remarks on this legislation for the RECORD.

Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the STEM Opportunities Act of 2019. A very similar bill passed the House as part of the America Competes Act of 2010, but unfortunately did not make it into the enacted law. As a result, every Congress since then, I have worked hard to keep the legislation updated and to convince my colleagues of the urgency of the challenges this bill addresses. Today I am reintroducing this bill with Ranking Member of the Science Committee, FRANK LUCAS. The goal of our legislation is to develop and implement evidence-based policies to promote the progress of women, minorities, and other groups underrepresented in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) studies and research careers.

The need for full engagement in STEM by women and underrepresented groups goes beyond enabling individuals to fulfill their dreams of becoming a scientist. Our economic future relies on what we do now to nurture the STEM talent that will be necessary to meet the demands of an increasingly technological and knowledge-based economy. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that STEM employment is the fastest growing sector, with computer science and engineering jobs among the fastest growing STEM occupations.

If things continue as they are now, however, I fear we will be ill equipped to fill these jobs. We are nineteen years into the 21st century and the demographics of the STEM workforce do not reflect the diversity of the nation. In 2017, women earned only 20 percent of bachelor's degrees in engineering and 19 percent in computer science. Black and Hispanic students are similarly underrepresented in these fields at the undergraduate level, and the problem is even more pronounced in STEM faculty. Women hold only 26 percent of all tenured and tenure-track positions, while Black and Hispanic faculty combined hold a dismal 6.8 percent of these positions. We need to leverage all of our human capital if we are to achieve the necessary capacity to innovate and to discover.

The STEM Opportunities Act is focused on identifying and lowering barriers for those who have already chosen a STEM path. First, so that we better understand the nature and scope of the challenges, the STEM Opportunities Act requires more comprehensive demographic data collection on the recipients of federal research awards and on STEM faculty at U.S. universities. These data would be available to researchers to study the participa-

tion and trajectories of women and underrepresented minorities in STEM so that policy makers can design more effective policies and practices to reduce barriers.

Next, this bill requires the development of consistent federal policies, such as no-cost award extensions, for recipients of federal research awards who have caregiving responsibilities, including care for a newborn or newly adopted child and care for a sick family member. The bill also requires consistent federal guidance to grant reviewers and program officers on best practices to minimize the effects of implicit bias in the review of federal research grants. It requires OSTP to develop guidance for universities and Federal laboratories to aid them in identifying any cultural and institutional barriers limiting the recruitment, retention, and achievement of women, minorities, rural students, and other underrepresented groups in academic and government STEM research careers and in developing and implementing current best practices for reducing such barriers. Finally, the legislation authorizes NSF to award grants to universities to implement or expand research-based practices targeted specifically at increasing the recruitment and retention of minority students and faculty.

Mr. Speaker, in developing this legislation, we solicited extensive input from governmental and non-governmental stakeholders to ensure that the guidance and requirements reflect today's needs and opportunities without unduly burdening our research universities. The result is a bipartisan bill that attempts to systematically address the full suite of issues facing both female and minority STEM researchers, from work-life balance policies, to campus climate, to better data collection, to recruitment and retention practices. This bill proposes concrete and evidence-based solutions to the indisputable reality that our nation continues to fall well short of engaging our entire talent pool in STEM careers. That disparity in our STEM workforce will continue to have real and increasing consequences for our economic and national security if we do not begin to implement scalable solutions soon.

I want to thank Ranking Member LUCAS for joining me in introducing this bill and for contributing his good ideas to make the bill even better. I urge the rest of our colleagues to join us and to help us move this legislation forward into law.

RECOGNIZING THE COLLIN COLLEGE STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

(Mr. TAYLOR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TAYLOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Collin College Student Government Association for winning the 2019 Event of the Year award at the Texas Junior College Student Government Association convention.

The event which earned the organization this prestigious recognition, "Love Does Not Hurt: An Oath Against Domestic Violence," provided resources for victims of domestic violence and featured speakers who inspired all in attendance.

I was honored to attend the event and witness firsthand the incredible difference these student leaders are making, both on and off campus.

I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me today in thanking the Student Government Association of Collin College for their dedication and commitment to our community.

NATIONAL FOSTER CARE MONTH

(Mr. LANGEVIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, as co-chair of the bipartisan Congressional Caucus on Foster Youth, I rise to recognize May as National Foster Care Month.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to bring front and center the more than 400,000 youth in our foster care system across the country. These young people are courageous, and they face and overcome many challenges.

Let's raise up their voices because they deserve to be heard, and they deserve a seat at the policymaking table.

May is also a time to recognize the foster care professionals, advocates, and families who devote themselves to supporting foster youth every day. These individuals deserve our utmost respect and our gratitude.

I am proud to cosponsor Representative KAREN BASS' resolution recognizing Foster Care Month.

To the foster youth and those who support them in Rhode Island and across the country, you matter, and I am here to be your advocate in Congress. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me.

SPIRIT OF SAVANNAH AIRCRAFT

(Mr. CARTER of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the partnership between the city of Savannah and the 165th Airlift Wing, symbolized by one of their aircrafts recently being named the "Spirit of Savannah."

Commemorating the C-130 airplane with its new name on Tuesday, April 9, the ceremony was a special occasion. It is now the only aircraft at the 165th that bears a unique designation and seal. I can't thank the members of the 165th Airlift Wing enough for their service.

They have flown to Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands to assist with hurricane recovery efforts. Just a few weeks later, they flew to Iraq and Syria to support missions against ISIS.

The work they do, based out of the First Congressional District of Georgia, helps keep our Nation and the entire world safe.